

Revised
—
JUL 28 1987

12/31/85

2

I met Esther Zimmer at the Old Spring Harbor Symp.
in July 1946. Her name had been mentioned to me by
George Beadle when I had requested some ~~pot~~ strains of
Neurospora. She was, he said, pursuing her M.A. thesis
on them. There was no fellowship for her to continue at
Stanford - at CSF she was seeking a job; as it turned
out Norman Gies recruited her as a technician in his
laboratory at Yale, where he planned to do biochemical work
on another ascocyste, *Ophiostoma*, and to study UV
mutagenesis in *Neurospora*.

Esther had substantial background in this field, having
worked previously with Alexander Hollaender at the NCI
on mutagenesis in *Ashbyella*. Even as an undergraduate
at Hunter College, she had assisted B.O. Dodge in Munyan

wrote at the N.Y. B.T. Conference. As a student at Hunter, she
 (Dr Salomon)
 had however been systematically disengaged from ambitions
 to do independent scientific work, a self-image she never
 totally dispelled.

21) - Esther was almost the first woman (she was then 24, I

of near my age who shared my intense interest in
 scientific work, and who was not fully preoccupied. I had met

one or two even more attractive ^{women} students in medical school

(including Dorothy Tamm - later Kriger — but she was

already engaged to Paul Marles) but there were none with

whom any intimacy seemed even a remote possibility.

Hannitt Taylor and Alice Schwabe, two graduate students at

Columbia, had written and rebuffed me in different ways,

and after different levels of engagement. Hannitt was certainly

the most accomplished woman I had met — but she was almost a decade older than myself. (after a stormy engagement with Bernard Dais, and many other psychotics jilting off numerous other sisters, she eventually met and later married Boris Ephrussi — a man 30 years her senior; she died very young, in ...)

I had had a childhood first love — a Bernard student of my own age — Judy Wasser whom I recall with the deepest affection. Our relationship was ~~uncomplicated~~^{unlike} by the childlike image I had of her. In later life, I learned to place even higher value on the quality of simple love and joy of togetherness that she offered.

At the time I was threatened by her urge to be emancipated from her mother that she felt could eventually by our

marriage — a step that (in 1944-45) seems to me grossly premature. I was never able to be fully straightforward with her; and bitterness about process ~~surpassed substance~~ in our oscillations towards estrangement.

~~The underlying theme of my fear of women as commitment,~~

CF
1/269

as hostages to fortune, as distractress from the conduct of science and from the life of the mind was the unspoken barrier between us.

To a minor degree, I had experienced my mother as overaffectionate and perhaps as demanding more from me in return than I could offer. There at home and responsibility to parents were merged as I strove to be 'left alone' to pursue my studies.

During adolescence, I had seen how much energy my peers spent in chess-gangs. Partly because less successful (my intellectual present self in that area) I would have none of such undifferentiated friendship. I never had to do any, and my

many other ways never heard the social games that might have reward the distance from other girls' play (girls and

boys) myself by my intellectivity.) My parents, now, know

how to help me find peers; that Stayson H.S. was all

boys did not help; I did not know enough to think of exploring other special schools like Hunter High School for girls. How would I

have approached such a community, ~~except~~ before getting serious.

These fears resonated with what I read in Cromwell and saw in the movie *Symphony of Six Millions* — that marriage would be in dire conflict with a script or professional career.

all this was the background of callow naivete, against

which Esther appeared to be a happy answer to many of my worries. Out of low self-expectations she was not eager for the stresses of marriage; but my attentions flattered her, and she gave

to my impetuous courtship ~~and progresses~~. After barely
3 months of acquaintanceship ~~I~~ accepted my proposal and

we were married by the New Haven ~~Baptist~~ ^{Methodist} on Friday

December 13, 1946. The following week, after ~~I had~~ informed
my parents of the event, we also sealed a ~~religious~~
^{atmospheric} ceremony in the presence of a score of family. Esther was
excluded from the key act of signature, in which only the ~~poor~~ father
and I took part.

I recall (or rather) our first conflict: during our mystical
weekend I wanted to hear a lecture by C. P. Rhoads on nitrogen
mustard and other antineoplastic chemicals. On the whole,
however, we had a clear contract: we would keep house with
symmetrical responsibilities and acknowledge the primary (if not
supremacy) of the obligation of scientific work.

As brief as our outfit was, it numbered some real
warmth of feeling and regard (if not an inconveniencce I could
have mistrusted) We let a furnished room (with the ^{MACHOL} Machol
sisters) on Trumbull St., a block from the Osborn Botanical Lab.
With a hot plate, we could make coffee for breakfast and sand-
wiches; we generally dined at the Yale Commons and at
the local ice cream shop. Two could live more cheaply than
one; and our joint income of about \$300/month sufficed to
sustain a rapid increase of weight (exacerbated by the
abundance of dairy and beef in Wisconsin from the following
year) that also spoke to some contentment. It seemed, and
would turn out truly with a vengeance, that I had gotten
just what I bargained for. I had not ~~fo~~told the depth of the deepening
uneasiness and dependency, nor my own ^{passivity} ~~susceptibility~~ to stand up

stood up

to his sister - years. That ego-ambiguity - so common in contrast to the frankness of my career ambitions, the pursuit of calling — was I realize ultimately demeaning to her. My now articulating what I wanted from her was ultimately demeaning; the answer became, to be let alone, i.e. nothing from her was of real value.

As Sept 1940 (?) we moved to the ~~the~~ ^{third} Madison

Wisconsin. My being married doubtless helped the

dean agree that I was mature enough (I was 22 years) to

be invited on the faculty; economically it had also

complicated any thought of returning to medical school —

What would Esther do then?

WW had stringent anti-revolution laws; during the depression state jobs were scarce, no more than

to a family. Esther was able to get a dispensation, and the same fellowship supported continuing her to graduate.

Ph.D. under the now-vanishing supervision of R.A. Buch. I suggested a research topic — the genetics of *sparks* — more mutability in *E. coli* that method with the interest in similar phenomena in *lambda*.

Esther was a careful worker, and an astute observer. It was in her notes that the phenomena of lysogenicity and of λ -virion assembly were first noted. These observations led to the exhibition of *E. coli* K-12's important plasmids (λ and F). She was less ~~she~~ capable — at the very best totally lacking in self-assurance — at either hypothesis-formulation and testing. The experiments she pursued for her thesis were gratifying; but nothing had been pursued

taking, and defending, were an agony I had to take mounted
part in, and how to evade or acknowledge this became a
major stress between us.

The years 1947-50 were nevertheless the beginning of
our marriage. We were able to move from ~~the~~ ^{an} barracks at
Treas Field, to ^{an} apartment in Civic Houses, to a rental
house, and then finally took the financial plunge of a
mortgage on a home of our own (19__). My wages
had risen rapidly from £3600 in 1957 to

^{edge town} ~~and~~ ^{face} The fear of that ~~small~~ from domesticity pressaged that our
marriage could remain fulfilling: once she earned her Ph.D

our plan was to start a family, following the happy pattern

^{spread} we saw among our friends. That would ~~set aside~~ the
conflicts of our intersecting careers; and enhance Esther's

e.g.
Dave
Bennett's

sense of responsibility. The summer of 1950 I was invited to a visiting professorship in B. California. We had a duty to fly auto from across the country * En route we stopped contingency - (diaphragm) and expectantly awaited pregnancy.

Month after month, nothing happened.

{ Did she subfertility wash up? If so nothing remediable; no further advice. Fertility of sexual relationship }

Wexman's policies softened a bit, and Esther was able to take a position as R. A. and continue elsewhere in the lot under my direction. This had been augmented with graduate students (M. Zwick) and post doctoral fellows (MC Ward), and [disappointing women]. Esther was de facto an executive for this group. "The boss' wife" is always in a difficult position; the combination of Esther's anxiety, meanness, and jealousy in my own mind made it near so; and I often felt in a position, again all too passively, of inability to confront her. I began to hint she would be better served by working in a more independent role — but she took such hints very badly and I never enforced them, however well founded my view that our marriage was in the balance. We were too proud (or stupid) for such counselling.) I began to be grateful that we were manifestly

* first car in '48

Stokes; account; right away —

inflation 150,53; Calif. threatening — we might hit 150 & more

was auto
accident in
1950 or 53?
?

steals - what a curmudgeon would be to inflict us on a child.
 (Did I begin to hold back severely; of these auxiliaries e.g. A.S.)

By the mid 50's I had become resigned to a marriage that oscillated between neutrality and hostility. Divorce seemed unthinkable; legally impossible in any dignified way and particularly uneconomical as she would { But I was sympathetic legal advice }. Nor could I visualize any alternative: would I enjoy being alone? With my compunctions, could I attract anyone "better" than I had? Esther had fulfilled my deepest expectations about women and about myself - & and therewith some nutritive needs about what human life was about. There were contradictions to that model. Domestic pangs like Ann Cow seem to be part and happy marriages; but I was sure I would be bored at the level of intellectual discourse (or, ~~and play~~^{sophy}) in which they could engage. I found myself under a malignant spell where Esther's disengagement of me became all too believable. At least in interspersed retellings ^{our} ~~her~~ excitements, and my passing acceptance of that should ~~self~~ ^{be} proof of my own deficiencies. So I continued to minimize that sphere and self-rewards in my work.

{ After 1955 shift in K12 lost momentum }
 but significant other excitements.

{	Episodes:	Dept Musical Teachers	1955
		met E. Klein ^{Smoking even} Fulbright, aesthetics;	1957
		Nobel Prize	1958

Said no to Jasons. When NSS?